

Success Stories from the 2010 ISE Annual Report to Congress

State, Local, and Tribal Information Sharing Successes

Analysts from the Hennepin County (Minnesota) Sheriff's Office Criminal Information Sharing and Analysis (CISA) Unit recently identified a trend of pharmacy robberies, which prompted local law enforcement to initiate an investigation. The investigation produced new information which was fed back to the analysts, allowing them to perform suspect link and timeline analysis and develop subject workups that eventually led to the apprehension of five individuals. CISA was established in 2007 to improve information sharing among federal, state, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies and to assist in the prevention and suppression of criminal activity by providing timely and accurate analysis of criminal information to county law enforcement agencies.

Indiana established its first web-enabled statewide intelligence sharing platform for entering, querying, and analyzing gang intelligence by authorized Indiana criminal justice authorities. The Indiana Gang Intelligence Network is a component of the Indiana Intelligence Fusion Center's Gang Intelligence Sharing Project and was created using stimulus funding for criminal justice projects. Its purpose is to improve the collection, analysis, and sharing of gang intelligence information among Indiana law enforcement and criminal justice agencies with the intent of preventing, reducing, and solving gang criminal activity consistent with protecting privacy, civil rights, and civil liberties.

Indiana law enforcement and criminal justice leaders are confident that this initiative will play a key role in combating illegal criminal gang activity and violent crime in the State of Indiana. In looking for ways to better use existing resources to prevent violence in and around area schools, the Southern Nevada Counterterrorism Center established a partnership with the Clark County School District Police Department which includes the assignment of a liaison officer to the Counterterrorism Center and the sharing of information, products, and resources that deal with potential or actual incidents. In addition, the School Police Department placed an executive staff member on the Center's governing board. Some of the successes from this partnership include: preventing a gang shootout; locating and returning a 6-year-old kidnap victim; and quickly determining that a bomb threat was not credible, which prevented valuable resources from being wasted. These examples illustrate that horizontal information sharing is often a result of institutionalizing relationships and is a critical component of the all-crimes and all-hazards fusion center approach to supporting law enforcement.

The CONNECT Consortium was created when four states with existing Web portals for accessing criminal justice information—Alabama, Kansas, Nebraska, and Wyoming,—came together to connect disparate systems so that all authorized criminal justice users, could obtain valuable information from across jurisdictional boundaries by using a single log-on to their respective portals. By combining the existing systems using the technology standards created by the U.S. Department of Justice's DOJ's Global Justice Information Sharing Initiative, they were able to implement a new approach to interstate information sharing. Central to this achievement was a policy framework that comprised a simple governance structure, standard memoranda of understanding, and individual and collective state privacy policies using the Global Justice Privacy and Civil Liberties Policy Development Guide and Implementation Templates.

The collaborative actions taken by the Pacific Regional Information Clearinghouse (Pac Clear) and the Missouri Information and Analysis Center (MIAC) enabled law enforcement to receive necessary information that led to the apprehension of an individual who made approximately 7 phone calls to a military facility in Hawaii, threatening to kill generals and other military personnel. The US Army and the Honolulu Police Department (HPD) identified this as a credible threat, and determined that the subject had previous connections to Missouri through information available in shared databases. Pac Clear became aware of the situation through eGuardian and identified an opportunity to provide support by offering to obtain more information about the subject's time in Missouri. Pac Clear made direct contact with the MIAC and within five minutes received a copy of the subject's Missouri driver's license photo and immediately forwarded it to the HPD. Shortly thereafter, HPD was able to post a "Be On the Look Out" alert with the subject's photo. The subject was apprehended because of the visual aid of the driver's license photo.

Over the last two decades separate single-agency Computer Aided Dispatch/Record Management Systems (CAD/RMS) have proliferated at law enforcement agencies across the U.S. These systems were effective in collecting and collating law enforcement records for a single agency; but their utility ended at the agency's jurisdictional boundary, since the information could not be shared with neighboring agencies. A number of states are now developing state-wide CAD/RMS systems to maximize criminal justice information sharing efforts. Delaware, Montana, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Vermont already have state-wide systems in place, and Indiana and Maryland will deploy systems soon. These state-wide systems allow officers to search hundreds of agency databases and millions of offender records in contrast to a single agency system that may provide access to only a few thousand records.

Nationwide Suspicious Activity Reporting Initiative Successes

Last year an employee at a self-storage facility noticed something unusual. A group of men had begun to meet frequently around a storage unit—as many as 20 or 30 times in the span of a few days—and were very careful to conceal their property by backing their SUV right up to the storage unit door. The self-storage facility had recently received information on indicators of suspicious activity as part of the NSI. The employee contacted local police. Local police ran checks and found that the FBI had an active investigation and the individuals were under surveillance. Two weeks after the employee's report, the FBI arrested four men on a number of terrorism charges, including charges arising from a plot to detonate explosives near a synagogue and to shoot military planes with Stinger surface-to-air guided missiles.

Shortly after attending training on the agency SAR process, a Los Angeles motorcycle officer observed a traffic violation, issued a citation, and impounded the vehicle. The officer then contacted the agency's Major Crimes Division and inquired about completing a SAR based on an expired international driver's license and the unusual level of anxiety expressed by the driver. After receiving the information, detectives conducted a follow-up investigation and discovered the information was of interest to the FBI, resulting in a further investigation.

A contract background Investigator for the DoD, telephoned the FBI's Threat Investigation Division office to report a suspicious vehicle. According to the investigator, the vehicle was moving so slowly that she almost had to come to a complete stop behind the car before she could safely pass. The investigator described the vehicle and reported that the driver appeared to be taking video footage of a military base using a telephoto lens. This information was received by a JTTF—through eGuardian—from Pentagon Force Protection. A trace of the license plate revealed that the subject of the incident had been involved in a pre-existing investigation.

In February 2010, the FBI's Internet Tip website received information that an identified soldier had made threatening comments about his National Guard Unit over a social network. This incident was uploaded

into eGuardian and shared with the appropriate FBI Field Office and the U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command. The matter is now the subject of a joint Army-FBI investigation.

In January 2010, a line officer at the Los Angeles Police Department, an ISE-SAR Evaluation Environment site, discovered a store owner who was selling illegal cigarettes, brass knuckles, counterfeit name-brand purses and wallets, and drug paraphernalia. While conducting a search at the store, LAPD officers observed a bomb-making recipe taped to the wall. Subsequently, the store owner was arrested, the recipe was determined to be a viable bomb-making formula, and an investigation into possible terrorism financing is ongoing.

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